

I. Introduction

- A. We don't know who the Psalmist is or exactly what the situation was but it is clear that they were in some form of deathly danger and God has delivered them.
- B. It is a very personal psalm. It is one of the "I" psalms. In 19 verses, the Psalmist refers to himself using the pronouns, I, me and my, 34 times. He refers to Yahweh, his covenant keeping God, 16 times.
- C. This is a psalm of praise and thanksgiving for deliverance from death
- D. The psalm begins and ends with praise and is interspersed with more praise and lots of thanksgiving.
- E. This psalm is part of the Egyptian Hallel. The Hallel consists of six Psalms 113–118. Hallel means praise and these psalms were sung often by the people of God on joyous occasions such as the Feast of Weeks and the Feast of Booths but most notably it was sung during the Passover celebration when the Jews were remembering God delivering them out of death in Egypt and into life in the Promised Land.

II. The Psalmist's prayer of praise & thanksgiving

- A. Prayer - Psalm 116 is not really a prayer but more of a tribute to answered prayer
 - 1. God has heard his prayer – This is the theme of this psalm. I will call upon the name of the Lord because I called on him before and he heard me.
 - 2. Pray in confidence even in the midst of affliction – The psalmist had confidence that God heard his prayers and this led him to pray all the more.
 - 3. The focus of the Psalmist's love is directed to one aspect of God's goodness – He hears prayer. Answered prayers cause gratitude, and gratitude brings forth a love that declares it will not cease praying.
- B. Praise and Thanksgiving - Praise is the joyful recounting of all God has done for us. It is closely intertwined with thanksgiving as we offer back to God appreciation for His mighty works on our behalf.
 - 1. Praise acknowledges who God is:
 - a) He is righteous– God has chosen to enter into covenant and he is faithful to keep it, his justice is on display in keeping this covenant
 - b) He is gracious - Grace is God giving us what we do not deserve
 - c) He is merciful – Mercy is God not giving us what we do deserve
 - 2. Thanksgiving acknowledges God for what He has done:
 - a) Thanksgiving that God hears & answers prayer Thanksgiving that God saves & delivers from terrible circumstances
 - (1) He was gripped by death.
 - (2) He was terrified.
 - (3) He was in distress and sorrow.
 - (4) He was very low.
 - (5) He was shedding many tears.
 - (6) He was about to stumble in his walk with God.

(7) He was greatly afflicted.

(8) He was alarmed to discover that all men connected to him were liars.

b) Thanksgiving that God preserves –The Lord preserves, or guards the simple, small person. God is in the business of preserving His people no matter how simple or foolish His people have been. God's people do foolish things. God delights in answering the prayer of those who have been foolish or simple.

c) Thanksgiving that God provides rest- The Lord's provision shows us that we can trust Him and rest that He will provide all that we need

C. What is offered in response to God's goodness?

1. He will accept God's gift of salvation and continue to call upon the name of the Lord, acknowledging that he is His

2. He will pay his vows - A vow is a pledge or commitment to follow God. This vow made in his time of trouble shows he wanted to learn to be a better more dedicated person.

3. He will give public thanksgiving for all God's benefits - He will be God's servant. This is a pledge to bow before God as Master

4. He will offer God the sacrifice of Thanksgiving – Among the sacrifices of the Old Testament were offerings that were given when people wanted to thank God in a special way. These "thank offerings" were among the "peace offerings" that were presented to the Lord and then eaten by the people in celebration. (Lev 7:11-12)

III. This is Christ's prayer of Praise and Thanksgiving

A. Psalm 116 is part of the last section of the Hallel (Psalm 115 – 118) that would be sung after the fourth and final cup of wine had been drunk.

1. The Four Cups of wine used in the Seder symbolize four distinct promises made by God as told in Exodus 6:6-7. These are traditionally referred to as follows:

a) Cup of Sanctification - "I will bring you out of Egypt"

b) Cup of Deliverance - "I will deliver you from Egyptian slavery"

c) Cup of Redemption - "I will redeem you with My power"

d) Cup of Restoration - "I will take you as My people"

2. Jesus drank the first two cups in the traditional way. At the third cup, the Cup of Redemption, he said: **"And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." (Matt. 26:27-28). Jesus told his disciples that He would not drink the fourth cup (the Cup of Restoration), but promised to do so with them in the coming Kingdom. "I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." (Matt. 26:29).**

3. **"And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives."**
(Matt.26:30)

IV. This is our prayer of Praise and Thanksgiving

A. It is ours in Christ - Jesus sings the "I" Psalms for us as our Savior.

***"But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."*(Ephesians 2:4-10 ESV)**

B. So what is our response?

1. We will accept God's gift of salvation and continue to call upon the name of the Lord, acknowledging that we are His
2. We will pay our vows
3. We will give public thanksgiving for all God's benefits
4. We will offer God the sacrifice of Thanksgiving
5. We will pray with praise and thanksgiving – We will pray now because He answered us before. The way God has dealt with us in the past gives us reason to hope in how he will deal with us in the present and the future. It is because of what He has done that we have hope and confidence in what He will do even though in our present circumstances we may be inclined to despair.

"I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. (Exodus 20:2 ESV)

In you our fathers trusted; they trusted, and you delivered them. To you they cried and were rescued; in you they trusted and were not put to shame. (Psalm 22:4-5 ESV)

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 ESV)

He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. (Colossians 1:13-14 ESV)

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. (Hebrews 13:8 ESV)

Questions for Further Discussion

1. This psalm is praising God and thanking Him for hearing and answering prayer. How do we praise Him and thank Him when it seems that our prayer isn't answered?
2. How can you publicly acknowledge your gratitude to God or what "thank offering" can you give him?
3. What vows have you made to God and are you keeping them?

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